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ABSTRACT

The document discusses miscalculations by public officials, arms control experts, journalists, and the general public regarding the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks; assesses the Salt II treaty; and suggests criteria for appraising Salt II. The objective is to stimulate research, education, dialogue, and political action which will contribute to a movement for a just world order. It is suggested that miscalculations regarding Salt II stem from failure to conduct a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation in light of criteria which take future security needs into account. Six criteria are suggested--the liklihood that Salt II will slow the arms buildup, lead toward renunciation of nuclear weapons, lead toward abandonment of the arms competition, increase public understanding of the causes of the arms buildup, stimulate more effective public pressure to achieve comprehensive arms reductions, and/or strengthen multilateral demilitarization procedures by international organizations. The conclusion is that if decision makers and other interested people apply these criteria to the Salt II treaty, they will concede that negotiation and ratification have facilitated mounting military expenditures and destructive capability without enhancing security. (Author/DB)

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SALT II: Illusion and Reality

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WORLD ORDER MODELS PROJECT
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This paper is one in a series of working papers commissioned by the World Order Models Project in its effort to stimulate research, education, dialogue, and political action which will contribute to a movement for a just world order. The papers will deal with major global problems facing humanity, and particularly vexing contemporary political, economic, social, and cultural issues within an analytic and normative framework guided by the concepts and values of peace, economic well-being, social justice, and ecological stability. Special emphasis will be given to the necessity and feasibility of structural transformation of today's fragmented world in order to resolve these problems and achieve just world order results.

A Working Group of the World Order Models Project (WOMP) will use these papers in its new program aimed at publishing a statement in 1980 outlining the strategies for realizing just world order during this century. We invite interested individuals throughout the globe to respond to the various papers either directly to the individual authors or to WOMP. These communications will figure significantly in the WOMP Working Group's final statement. Where appropriate, the responses and critiques will be published in *Alternatives: A Journal of World Policy.*

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SALT II : ILLUSION AND REALITY*

Robert C. JOHANSEN†

The central argument of this paper is that public officials, arms control experts, journalists, and much of the general public have misjudged the value of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in general and the SALT II treaty in particular. These miscalculations spring from the failure to conduct a comprehensive, rigorous evaluation of the SALT process in light of explicit, concrete criteria which take account of the future security needs of the planet's people. The author proposes six such criteria for appraising the SALT II treaty and for determining the most promising direction for SALT III or other subsequent negotiations. The application of the criteria leads to the conclusion that the processes of negotiation and ratification have not enhanced security. On the contrary, they have facilitated mounting military expenditures and destructive capability as reflected in increases in the number of strategic warheads and missile accuracy and mobility; they not only have legitimized existing nuclear arsenals but also now encourage the shift to a less stable strategic doctrine; they leave untouched the real causes of the arms buildup; they make no effort to provide a more dependable security system than an uncertain expansion of nuclear deterrence; they exclude multilateral monitoring and peace-seeking procedures which are essential for encouraging a security system based on demilitarization; they legitimize and perpetuate a system of great-power dominance; they in practice allow the superpowers to hold the world's peoples as nuclear hostages. The author explains why SALT is more a charade than an arms reversal program. He concludes that a redirection of policies away from the illusive goal of stabilization at high levels of military preparedness and toward steps aimed at the abolition of war as an accepted institution will do far more to increase security while more effectively realizing commonly professed humanitarian values.

I. Introduction

Although I have spent most of my time in recent years trying to halt the arms buildup, I cannot in good conscience join the campaign to ratify the

*A shorter version of this paper appeared in the May 1979 issue of *Harper's*.

†President, *Institute for World Order*.

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new treaty emerging from the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II). An understanding of the political context surrounding the entire SALT process reveals that it *discourages* a genuine halt to the growth of armaments. Military and civilian officials from the Pentagon understand this, which is why they will endorse the SALT II treaty. Although it does not dictate an increase in armaments, the negotiation and ratification processes provide the political conditions that facilitate an increase in military expenditures, overall destructive capability, the number of strategic warheads, missile accuracy, missile mobility, the variety of modes for launching warheads, and the difficulty of inspecting any future arms limitation agreements. I doubt that the provisions of the SALT II treaty are desirable enough for individuals and groups who want to reverse the arms race to devote their time, energy, and money to the ratification of the treaty.

Yet most liberal foreign policy lobbying organizations, church offices in Washington, and peace groups are working diligently to assure ratification of SALT II. Why? Without a concrete assessment of SALT's impact, most advocates of arms reductions have believed that the human race will be at least slightly better off with SALT II than without it. 'If SALT II is defeated in the Senate', the argument goes, 'forget about anything more significant. We can't get SALT III, with deep reductions in arms, until after we ratify SALT II.' This argument appears to be persuasive at first glance. But because the tide of planetary militarization is running strongly against arms reductions despite success in SALT, this conclusion must be examined carefully.

II. Evaluation of SALT II

I propose six criteria for determining the value of a SALT II treaty.

1. Will SALT II slow the arms buildup?

Even with the promise of successful negotiations, the Carter administration has already projected for the next several years an average annual increase in military expenditures of 3% above inflation. In sharp contrast to his campaign pledge of a $5–7 billion cut in the military budget, President Carter recently declared: 'Our goal ... is to increase the real level of defense expenditures. This is our goal.'[1] Increased spending by both the United States and the Soviet

[1] Text in *New York Times*, December 1, 1978, p.22.

Union will be used in part to develop and produce new nuclear warheads and delivery systems.

The destructive capabilities of both nations will also increase enormously, even if SALT II is ratified. The United States and Soviet Union respectively possess roughly 40 and 20 times the number of warheads required to destroy the other's society. In his inaugural address, President Carter reported that 2% of the US strategic arsenal could destroy all large and medium-sized Soviet cities. Yet the treaty will not call for abolishing a single warhead or even for freezing warheads at their present levels of destructiveness. The SALT II limits on the number of strategic launchers will still allow the placement of new missiles in existing silos and many more warheads on those vehicles. In addition to the strategic arsenal to which the President referred, the United States has 22 000 'tactical' weapons, many of which are several times the power of the Hiroshima bomb. SALT II puts no limit on 'tactical' weapons.

A SALT II treaty, like SALT I before it, will provide a convenient rationale for arms *increases*. For example, when the number of strategic missiles was limited by SALT I six years ago, Defense Department officials used this limit as an argument for putting more than one warhead on each missile. This technological 'improvement', when later imitated by the Soviet Union, produced new Soviet capability that now makes the US ICBM force vulnerable to Soviet attack and therefore becomes the excuse in the United States for a totally new mobile ICBM, the M-X. Pentagon officials also agreed to support SALT I on condition that they could develop the cruise missile which was *not* covered by SALT I. The cruise missile then became a major stumbling block in negotiating a SALT II agreement, and it will make extremely difficult the inspection of any future effort at limitation.

When SALT II established a ceiling of 1320 MIRVs (multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles) at the Vladivostok meeting (1974) of President Ford and Premier Leonid Brezhnev, this very high ceiling quickly became a target for large, additional deployments. At the time the US had deployed 832 missiles with multiple warheads; the Soviet Union had none. That historical moment presented an easy opportunity to ban MIRVs completely; but they were not, because of the guiding principle for arms control negotiations: limit the weapons considered least important to develop, and allow unrestricted development in other areas.

SALT II negotiators have carefully followed this principle. The treaty will allow the further testing of a maneuverable re-entry vehicle (MaRV) to increase warhead accuracy. This development is useful primarily for attacking an opponent's nuclear forces and for establishing a nuclear war-fighting capability. Such targeting precision is not necessary for simple deterrence of an attack. It will, however, stimulate a counterresponse from

the Soviet Union. Such a response will then make the US deterrent more vulnerable and therefore will be used as the rationale for new US deployments. The high MIRV ceiling in SALT II, for example, is already being used to justify the need for the M–X. Few people recall that the earlier US arms control decision not to try to ban MIRVs is now the stimulant for an entirely new ICBM.

US negotiators in SALT II protected the right to develop this larger, more accurate missile with the intention of making it mobile so as to keep the Soviet Union guessing where it is deployed. Because of its MIRVed capability, this missile will increase the vulnerability of the Soviet land–based missiles, make Soviet leaders feel extremely insecure during a crisis, and stimulate them to match new US deployments. It will also make inspection of any future limitations much more difficult, thus decreasing the prospects for genuine strategic reductions if there should ever be a SALT III treaty. The decision to develop this new missile became a foregone conclusion as SALT II negotiations proceeded, not because there was a security need for it, but because there was a political need to offer this payoff to Pentagon officials in order to get their support for SALT II.

The principle the Pentagon follows in supporting arms control negotiations is always the same: concede less to executive and legislative advocates of arms reductions than is wrung from them in the form of commitments to go ahead with more exciting new weapons programs. With this as an operating principle, the more arms control negotiations appear to be serious and successful, the more rapidly the normal resistance to unnecessary new arms programs erodes. That is why 'success at SALT' has meant an increase in military expenditures and destructive capability.

Rather than slow the arms competition, the promise of a SALT treaty in some cases has speeded up the rush toward more numerous and destructive weapons. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, for example, recently directed Air Force and civilian analysts to accelerate planning for the best way to deploy the new mobile M–X missile so that President Carter could announce plans for the more deadly ICBM in time to help ease the way for Senate approval of the SALT II agreement. Whereas the decision-making process was previously scheduled to take at least until the end of 1977, the new schedule, stimulated by SALT, advanced the date for Brown's recommendation to April 1.[2]

SALT II will also allow the development of the Trident submarine, the longer–range Trident missile, the cruise missile, and neutron weapons. The SALT II ceilings on missile launchers are not sacrificial ones. The United States has not wanted more launchers (as opposed to warheads) than

[2] *New York Times*, December 21, 1978.

it now has, a level below the ceilings in SALT II. The Soviet Union will have to dismantle approximately 250 aging launchers, but it will more than compensate for these by adding hundreds of warheads to its other missiles which will be permitted by the high MIRV ceiling.

Whether measured in terms of expenditures, destructive capability, destabilizing technological developments, or the propensity for military power to grow around the world, SALT II will not slow the growth of arms. Of course, it is possible to argue that the arms buildup would be even further advanced if there had been no SALT agreements. But that argument is not based upon a careful appraisal of pre-SALT projections for developing specific weapons, military strategies, or expenditures.

2. Will SALT II lead toward the renunciation of nuclear weapons?

SALT II does nothing to call into question the legitimacy of the nuclear weapons of both superpowers. It makes no attempt even to freeze the nuclear arsenals at their present levels. Yet the existing number of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons far exceeds any conceivable set of useful targets.

Placing nuclear armed cruise missiles on bombers, as SALT II will allow, undermines efforts to prohibit them in land- and sea-based launch modes. Because the cruise missile can be adapted easily from one mode to another, it will be difficult to verify any possible future prohibitions against land- or sea-based cruise missiles without extensive on-site inspection. In contrast, a complete prohibition of all cruise missiles – which the United States rejected in SALT II – would be far easier to verify, as well as more effective in stopping the arms buildup and the further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In brief, SALT II legitimizes the nuclear weapons below the ceilings, encourages building *up* to those ceilings, and, outside the ceilings, explicitly allows new weapons that will make future reductions more difficult. It fails to move the United States, Soviet Union, other nuclear powers, and near-nuclear-weapon countries closer to the renunciation of nuclear arms.

3. Will SALT II lead toward the abandonment of the arms competition?

The most destabilizing forms of arms competition today are qualitative improvements which make weapons faster, more deadly, more accurate, and more difficult to detect or defend against. SALT II will not prevent a single important qualitative development now on the drawing boards.

Proponents of SALT II, whether in Moscow or Washington, point out that SALT II is desirable because it will contribute to *detente*. That may or may not

be true, but we should recall that military expenditures, after discounting inflation, have risen faster during *detente* than previously. SALT II will not scale down the diplomatic advantages the two military giants enjoy in their relations with other countries – advantages derived in part from their military power. As a result, other governments will continue to feel the need for more arms if they seek to reduce inequities in global decision-making.

Detente and the SALT agreement between the United States and Soviet Union signal, not an end to arms competition, but, instead, an accord between the two most heavily armed governments on how to manage the undiminished arms competition. SALT II is a clever managing device to enable the United States and Soviet Union to put fewer resources into the type of weapons (e.g., stationary, land-based, single-warhead ICBMs) where an increase in their superiority over the rest of the world's governments will no longer matter. Moscow and Washington will then pour more money and brainpower into areas of technology where they can further outpace the rest of the world militarily.

4. Will SALT II and the ratification process lead the public to a better understanding of the causes of the arms buildup?

An accurate understanding of the basic causes of the arms race will be obscured by a ratification process which tries to convince the public that SALT II is an important achievement in slowing the arms buildup. It is more accurate and politically promising to help the public understand the futility, given the present government priorities, of the arms-control approach to achieving an increase in security or a decrease in weaponry. Negotiators – no matter how well intentioned – cannot *reduce* arms substantially at the same time that they *rely* heavily on them for security and diplomatic influence. Arms can be deeply cut only when security can be achieved through means that do not depend so completely on national military forces. This requires us to think seriously, not about piecemeal, stopgap measures of arms stabilization or control within the present international system (which is a war system based on the threat or use of force), but about steps to take toward the creation of an alternative security system.

Given the political will, it is possible to implement a feasible step-by-step approach that would move us toward the abolition of war as an accepted institution, much as slavery shifted in our thinking and behavior from an acceptable to an unacceptable human institution during the 1800s.[3] In effect

[3]This idea is elaborated in Robert C. Johansen, *Toward a Dependable Peace* (New York: The Institute for World Order, 1978).

that portion of human interactions across national boundaries which now is part of a war system would be transformed into a peace system. A peace system already governs many of those human interactions, such as trade and travel, just as years ago slaves related to non-slaves in some ways that were similar to the human relations that free people had with one another (e.g., mutual affection grew, at least for a short time, between slaves responsible for child care and the slaveholder's children whom they raised).

The idea of abolishing war which at first glance seems blushingly unrealistic turns out upon further examination to be realistic enough; it already has been partly implemented. In fact, peaceful resolution of conflicts is the rule, not the exception, for most human interactions *within* nation-states and even in the majority of relationships *across* national boundaries. The full blossoming of the abolitionist idea depends upon cultivation by people bold and imaginative enough to see that nonviolent conflict resolution, with appropriate institutional reform and attitudinal change, can be expanded to all areas of international life.

Unfortunately, a campaign to ratify SALT II will lead the public into the mistaken belief that the best road to genuine arms reductions is through negotiations similar to SALT I and II. Yet, these policies will not produce a demilitarized security system because they aim to manage the arms competition, not to terminate it.

Giving the SALT process center stage reinforces two erroneous assumptions about the causes of the arms buildup: that it has continued primarily because of the difficulty of reaching agreement with the Soviet Union, and that the achievement of an agreement means taking strides toward arms reductions. More accurately, the two most important stimulants of more arms are: (1) the nature of the international system made up of militarily competitive, autonomous national sovereignties; and (2) domestic pressure for high military expenditures, whether motivated by economic or security considerations. The SALT II agreement with the Soviet Union will not alleviate either of these causes of the arms buildup.

The construction of a promising movement to reduce arms must be founded on the idea that the link between security and arms can be weakened, and an alternative link forged between security and a demilitarized world.

5. Will SALT II lead to more effective public pressure to achieve comprehensive arms reductions?

To the extent that the SALT II ratification process will misdirect the public away from a more dependable security system, it will divert US citizens from sensible and essential political action to achieve arms reductions.

Public support for the SALT process condones nuclear deterrence and the maintainance of a US technological edge in weapons. Support for SALT II will not communicate sufficient public insistence on moving away from present military strategies and toward a demilitarized world. Yet, without this strong message the government will not make such changes. The world's two leading military powers will not be enthusiastic about creating a world in which military power will play no role – not, at least, until the public insists upon it. People against slavery learned the same lesson. Finally, the Abolitionists insisted on nothing less than total and immediate emancipation.

But, surely, critics might say, the US government is not as indifferent to creating a genuinely peaceful world order as I claim. One further test of this argument is to examine the way in which the United States wants SALT II to be carried out. This is the focus of the last criterion for assessing the value of SALT II.

6. Will SALT II strengthen multilateral procedures and broadly representative international organizations which eventually must play a major role in achieving and enforcing a demilitarized world security system?

A transnational monitoring agency which includes third parties is a necessary part of *any* long-range policy to increase human security while decreasing arms. Yet, with characteristic arrogance of power, the US and Soviet governments act as if they were the only two governments in the world who have a right to monitor their nuclear postures – postures which cannot avoid affecting every inhabitant of the planet. It is no credit to our NATO allies that they allow the United States to take this position.

The verification of SALT II could be carried out by a global multilateral agency. Establishing such an agency would be a positive accomplishment in itself. It could begin to fulfill a permanent monitoring function necessary for verifying reductions and eventually abolishing arms. Even with such an agency for monitoring SALT II, the United States could still maintain its own national means of verification to reassure those who might doubt the reliability of the global agency during its infancy. Despite the absence of any reasonable argument against this idea, the United States refuses initiatives in this direction because it has no long-range policy for arms reductions.

Far from strengthening international peace-keeping organizations and increasing their representativeness, SALT II is a continuation or, even worse, a further advancement of a system of great-power dominance over the economically and militarily less powerful societies. The attitudes undergirding SALT II will, in my opinion, some day be seen as a late twentieth-century manifestation of old-fashioned imperialism. The Big Two, who produce

ever greater military fruits despite *detente*, do not colonize other societies, but, intentionally or not, they do hold most of the world's population hostage to the threat of instant genocide. Moreover, the world's people are subjected to taxation without representation – through the worldwide, negative economic consequences of unnecessary military expenditures. Much of the world's population suffers under political repression, partly encouraged by militarism and alliance-building that are nurtured by US and Soviet postures. Many of the world's people are denied lives of dignity by the military's wasting scarce resources, such as the Pentagon's consumption of enough energy in one year to run all of our nation's urban bus systems for twenty-two years. Five percent of the world's total military expenditures could, over a twenty-year period, eliminate abject poverty from the planet. The world's oceans and atmosphere are contaminated from wastes produced by activities such as the production of nuclear warheads, the servicing of nuclear submarines, and nuclear accidents.

This taxation, repression, deprivation, and contamination without representation violate the ideals of the US heritage and the American revolution. Nuclear weapons, whether used or merely produced, and gigantic military expenditures affect the rest of the world's population and unborn generations. These voices, more numerous and more in need of being heard than those listened to in SALT II, are unrepresented in the SALT II decisions. Pro-SALT II groups might want to give more of their valuable time to amplifying those voices than to insuring that the military elites of Moscow and Washington get the votes they want in the US Senate. The SALT II treaty may be a positive expression of political collaboration between the Kremlin and the White House, but it is not a serious effort to achieve a secure and peaceful world or a life of greater justice for many other societies of the world, conditions which are prerequisites to genuine peace.

Although some of the preceding six questions deserve more comprehensive analysis than can be given here, after much thought I am forced to answer 'no' to each question. An awareness of the political meaning of the SALT process leads one out of an insignificant or essentially negative campaign to ratify SALT II and into a positive campaign for transformation of the war system into a peace system.

My point is not that a SALT II treaty itself is severely harmful, but that it will be harmful to convince the public – as a campaign for ratification must do – that SALT II is helpful. Also, it *is* harmful to pour the scarce energy and money of well-intentioned foreign policy lobbying and peace organizations into ratification of this treaty when resources are needed for the much more vital and promising effort to establish a political movement for a global transformation.

III. Miscalculation of the value of SALT II

Before discussing that need, it is instructive to ask: why have most critics of the arms buildup miscalculated the value of SALT II?

First, through years of political conditioning and careless thinking we have accepted the idea that the major impediment to arms reduction has been Soviet stubbornness or, at the least, the difficulty of bringing the United States and the Soviet Union to a point of agreement. The heart of the armament problem, in this view, is the failure to agree on arms control. Therefore, when negotiations produce agreement, arms opponents rush to ratify it.

But the problem is not (and never was) merely the failure to agree. It is the absence of a commitment to reverse the arms race and demilitarize the global security system. The entire SALT process offers no progress in making a commitment to solve the fundamental problem. The purpose of the SALT process is to stabilize the nuclear deterrent so that it can be maintained, not to delegitimize it. Maintaining the deterrent will invariably lead to pressure to upgrade military forces and resume the arms race.

The unexamined willingness to support SALT II is rooted also in our inability to transcend our ethnocentric world view. If we were concerned about the security of the human species instead of the US–Soviet numerical competition in Hitlerian hardware, a treaty which does not even prohibit the deployment of more advanced missiles or additional nuclear warheads, let alone *reduce* present destructive capability, would not take on such significance.

Deep longing for a negotiated agreement with the Soviet Union has diverted attention away from an examination of the stakes that have been lost in the overall effort to halt the arms buildup. In fact, the most important concessions of the entire SALT II process have not been made by US and Soviet negotiators to one another. The most serious concessions have been made *within* the United States, during the formulation of a US position, by the advocates of arms reductions to the advocates of new weaponry.

People favoring arms reductions lost all the important policy battles before the agreement was signed. Little more can be lost in the ratification process. Should those of us who favor arms reductions work now to ratify our defeats?

To reach a negotiated agreement with the Soviet Union after more than six years of negotiations since SALT I does not mean that fewer concessions were made to Pentagon requests for new weapons than would have been made during 'normal' years without 'successful' SALT negotiations. Indeed, a careful examination of the Congressional and public response to Pentagon requests suggests abnormally high willingness to cave in to military demands in the hope that military officials would in return not scuttle SALT.

To be sure, if we look only at the SALT II treaty itself, it might seem that we would be better off with the treaty than without it. But that conclusion is a product of short memories and ignorance of the events surrounding the treaty. We forget the intention, abandoned after SALT I, of achieving a treaty of unlimited duration. (SALT II will last until 1985.)

Second, we forget how much lower were the number of warheads, how much more stable was the strategic doctrine, how much less capable the superpowers were of fighting nuclear war when SALT began than they are today. If one measures from the beginning of SALT in 1969, it is hard to believe that arms opponents would be in any worse position if there had been no SALT at all. The SALT process helped legitimize MIRVs and now is giving a boost to the cruise missile, the M–X, and the shift to a nuclear war–fighting capability, as opposed to a posture aimed simply at deterring an attack. More than 4000 of the US strategic arsenal of roughly 10 000 warheads have been deployed since SALT I was signed. Even the major achievement of SALT I, a limitation on the number of anti–missile–missiles (ABMs), is not so clearly useful. It might have been better for the Pentagon to build ABMs which would merely waste money because they were useless, than to 'save' the money from ABM expenditures and divert it into the far more dangerous development of MIRVs, MaRVs, and the M–X. Arms controllers have mistakenly believed that it is better to ratify an agreement to stop the Pentagon from wasting resources in doing something useless when in fact such agreements *facilitate* the Pentagon's doing something far more harmful. The achievement of both SALT I and SALT II is to curtail relatively insignificant parts of a quantitative race so that more money and brainpower can be devoted to a more dangerous qualitative arms race.

Given the present balance of political forces in the United States, virtually any agreement the Pentagon will accept is not going to reduce our reliance on military power or our destructive capability. Carter began his presidency intending to cut the military budget and take steps toward 'the elimination of all nuclear weapons from this earth'. But he was forced to concede so much to the Pentagon that he now is increasing expenditures and military forces. Similarly, SALT may have been inspired by good intentions, but after concessions to military officials to purchase their support for SALT II, its consequences contradict its inspiration.

The Pentagon enjoys a veto over the content of US arms control policy. Thus the first task of those who would reduce arms must be a basic educational and organizing campaign that will change the balance of political forces and provide a determined constituency that will take away the military veto in the US decision–making process. That kind of pro–reduction, political strength cannot be built up by allying ourselves with the Pentagon to ratify SALT II.

Third, political miscalculations also flow from too much fearful preoccupation with right-wing opponents of arms reductions and too little anxiety-free imagining of what the world can become. Because ultra patriots oppose negotiations with the Soviet Union, we favor them. Because the right criticizes an agreement near consummation, we come to its defense. Arms advocates think that it matters whether the United States can have 2500 strategic missiles instead of 2250, and they reject a limit at 2250. So we agree that it matters, and insist on the 2250 of SALT II. In truth, it does not matter whether the United States can destroy all Soviet cities forty times or fifty times over. SALT II obscures if it does not directly deny this truth.

To oppose the political right is an easier and more tangible act than to oppose the war system, but it is also less promising. To think seriously about abolishing war as an accepted institution means a fundamental questioning of the present international system where we enjoy privileges because of the present global distribution of power and wealth. Yet without commitment to demilitarization of the world security system, one or two weapons systems will come and go, as SALT fails or succeeds. But the return to new arms buildups – like the craving for a fix by an unreformed addict – will always return until steps are taken to kick the military habit completely. We should carry that message to our Senators rather than the appeal to vote 'yes' on SALT II.

Motivated by a desire to hold political ground against the advance of growing conservative forces, many people argue that advocates of arms reduction must work to ratify a relatively useless SALT II primarily to achieve later on a more desirable SALT III. Yet, that is an admission that SALT II is not worth the lobbying effort in itself. If so, then we should lobby *now* for the comprehensive arms reductions that we unrealistically hope will be part of SALT III, and forget about SALT II. If such a lobbying effort were successful, SALT II would be passed easily. In other words, lobbying for a demilitarized security system would, as a side effect, encourage the ratification of SALT II, but lobbying for SALT II will not produce comprehensive arms reduction.

For those who will work for ratification of SALT II, despite these arguments, I suggest that any Senator who is asked to vote 'yes' on SALT also be asked to put meaning into that vote by a public pledge to vote for a 10% annual reduction in military expenditures, to be continued indefinitely if reciprocated by the Soviet Union. Of course, *if a vote for SALT II were synonymous with a vote for a budget cut or even a freeze, the Pentagon would oppose it and SALT II would fail* – unless a strong public movement had been established to insist on moving toward an alternative security system. This reality exposes the true meaning of SALT.

A preoccupation with political opponents on the right lured us into support

for arms control in the beginning. In following the twists and turns of arms control negotiations, we have steadily lost ground since the old days when *disarmament* was at least a rhetorical goal. We thought we were making concessions to realism by embracing arms control, because disarmament did not seem feasible – but, instead, we made a concession to militarism. The nongovernmental arms control community in 1979, supposedly on the cutting edge in pressing the government toward a more enlightened policy, is actually far less progressive than were some government officials years ago. Since the 1950s the growth of military influence and mentality in our legislative and executive chambers has spread to a majority of public opinion leaders. That the spread has been without maliciousness does not make its impact upon the body politic any less malignant. In the early 1960s, the US representative to the United Nations could declare: 'We do not hold the vision of a world without conflict. We do hold the vision of a world without war – and this inevitably requires an *alternative system* for coping with conflict. We cannot have one without the other.'[4] Today, such ideas are not even the object of serious study, let alone advocacy, by Washington-based arms controllers *in* or *outside* the government.

Organizations with offices in Washington get easily caught up in counting votes to achieve legislative 'victories', without careful assessment of whether a victory matters in the long run. A treaty ratification campaign offers a concrete goal, something useful for mobilizing constituents and contributors. It is exciting to have lunch with Washington influentials to plan strategy for a legislative battle. Those tasks are important, but *only* when the battle is over a fundamental issue, which SALT II definitely is not. As a result, these activities are a temptation to cooptation and a diversion from the need for opening minds to the possibility of security without a war system. Nonetheless, during 1978 leaders from labor unions, liberal lobbying groups, and almost all peace organizations joined the SALT bandwagon.[5]

We also miscalculate the value of SALT because political leaders are eager to attribute an historic importance to their work – an importance that history often later belies. SALT II is based on slightly revised ceilings that were agreed upon by President Gerald Ford and Party Secretary Leonid Brezhnev at Vladivostok more than four years ago. Ford described the

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[4]Adlai E. Stevenson, 'Working Toward a World Without War', statement made in Committee I, United Nations, November 15, 1961, reprinted in United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *Disarmament: The New U.S. Initiative* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 18. Emphasis added.

[5]The groups included the Institute for Policy Studies, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, New Directions, SANE, the Center for Defense Information, the Arms Reversal Program of the United World Federalists, and peace and social action committees of many religious organizations.

Vladivostok Accord as 'a real breakthrough that puts a cap on the arms race..., thus preventing an arms race with all its terror, instability, war-breeding tension and economic waste'. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger observed that when the accord was formally ratified, this 'major breakthrough' would '...be seen as one of the turning points in the history of the post-world War II arms race'.[6] More than four years have passed, and the Vladivostok ceilings have not been significantly exceeded by either side. Yet there is no evidence that a major breakthrough has occurred in putting a cap on the arms buildup. Indeed, now that he is no longer Secretary of State, Kissinger seems to possess a steadier grasp of reality in recently saying that the SALT treaty 'at best slightly limits existing weapons programs....'[7]

SALT is more a charade than an arms reversal program. It serves the political needs of politicians, not the security needs of the human race. Political leaders act as if they were making something big happen, but the military budget and destructive capability increase. Those weighty Senators, whether Henry Jackson seeking to expand his power in the Democratic Party, or Howard Baker and other Republican Presidential apprentices appear on the political stage as actors exercising seasoned judgment and cautious wisdom by suggesting that they might oppose ratification because SALT II would restrict the United States too much. Always eager for drama, the media eagerly pick up an impending battle on Capitol Hill, make it newsworthy, and describe mere political theatre as vital to the future of the Republic – meanwhile ignoring what *is* significant about the public's loss of control over the militarization of the planet.

Not all of these people understand that they participate in a charade, but neither do they seriously question how present military policies, with or without SALT, will increase human security in the long run. They are blind to deep analysis of security because it would raise such fundamental questions about mainstream assumptions that they, subconsciously at least, fear they would lose their 'realist' credentials – and their power – if they raised these openly.

The quality of the charade is illustrated by the President's strategy of attempting to increase the number of Senatorial votes for SALT ratification by appointing a career military officer, George Seignious, to head the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. If the Washington climate is so hostile to arms reductions that a military official and previous opponent of arms control must head the agency responsible for reduction in order to get Senate ratification of a treaty as harmless to the military as SALT II, can anyone

[6] 'Interview for Bill Moyers' "Journal" ', *Department of State Bulletin*, February 10, 1975, p. 176.
[7] *New York Times*, Febrary 2, 1979.

really believe that we are about to take a significant step down the road toward arms reduction?

Recalling the Ford–Kissinger policies should alert us to another important point: there is no significant difference between the political *behavior* (as opposed to rhetoric) of Democrats and Republicans on fundamental security issues. Both the pro–SALT II Carter administration and the anti–SALT II conservative Republicans accept most of the same assumptions about the international security system; neither group tries to change those assumptions. They say, in effect, 'A war system is here to stay – at least during my term of office. To move beyond rhetorical flourishes and to take action to reverse the arms buildup and to replace the war system with a peace system is unrealistic.'

Conclusion

The US public and the world's public face a problem similar to the one we faced in the Vietnamese conflict in the mid–1960s. Few US political leaders at that time wanted to suffer the assumed political costs to their own careers of advocating a withdrawal of US personnel, regardless of how unpromising were the prospects for continuing the escalation of US military forces. In the late 1970s, few political leaders are willing to accept the assumed political costs of advocating a practical program for abolition of war, regardless of how unpromising may seem the long–range prospects for continuing the escalation of armaments.

It is time for a new anti–war coalition to come together. In addition to familiar anti–war activists, this time it must include environmentalists who oppose ecocide, feminists who understand how deeply ingrained, erroneous, and unjust are our myths about power, the poor who suffer the most from militaristic consumption of resources, and political conservatives who believe that some variation of a system of law and nonviolent conflict resolution, which resolves disputes domestically, should be developed for world society.

Unexamined enthusiasm for SALT comes easily because we have lost a clear moral sense of right and wrong. It is a tragic self–deception to think that the important point for peace advocates to make in 1979 is that we will be better off with SALT II than without it. A more important and accurate message is that the weapons which now exist, and will remain after SALT II, are morally unacceptable. No less than a gas chamber for innocents, a nuclear furnace for any purpose is a fundamental denial of the most revered ethical teachings of all civilizations.

Yet, the US and Soviet military postures are not aimed at eliminating the role of nuclear weapons or military power in human affairs – with or without

SALT. The military officials of the two countries are not in alliance to spur the arms race and to violate the global human interest, but the effect is the same as if they were. The mutual US–Soviet military stimulation, with its attendant consequences of nuclear proliferation and destabilizing weaponry, poses a greater long-term threat to the human race than does the present Soviet arsenal to the US population.

If 150 years ago we had been slaves who believed in emancipation, we doubtless would not have wanted any political agreement that, in the name of limiting slavery, legitimized it at one level and stimulated the expansion of the institution in other areas that were not regulated. We are not slaves, but we are hostages to the nuclear-weapons policies of the United States and Soviet Union. Even without war the arms buildup means we are more likely to be unemployed, to suffer hardship from inflation, to have polluted air and water, to live in overpriced and under-par housing, to receive poor medical care and education, and to reap the resentment and social decay of those who are forced to live in poverty.

For centuries, slaves and their friends were unable to throw off slavery because they were intimidated and conditioned to believe that their fate could not be changed. The same is true today for most nuclear hostages who believe that it is unrealistic to work for any security system basically different from the existing one. The bonds of slavery were broken when enough people said simply, 'It's wrong to own a slave.' Perhaps it is time for all hostages to say, 'War, like slavery, is no longer an acceptable institution.' Such an orientation will move governments to take fundamentally different initiatives which can, one step at a time, transform the international security system.